Annual Report on the Working of the Backward Class Department 1939-40

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ANNUAL REPORT ON THE WORKING OF THE BACKWARD CLASS DEPARTMENT FOR THE YEAR 1939-40.

No. B.C.P.R. 57/2 of 1940.

Poona, 1st October 1940.

FROM

P. J. GHANDY, ESQUIRE,
Backward Class Officer,
Bombay Province, Poona;

To

THE SECRETARY TO GOVERNMENT,
General Department, Bombay.

Subject.—Report on the working of the Backward Class Department for 1939-40.

Sir,

I have the honour to submit the Administration Report on the working of the Backward Class Branch of this Department for the year ending 31st March 1940.

Charge.

2. The charge of the Backward Class Officer was held by Mr. D. A. Dhruva, B.A. (Oxon.), for the whole year except from 15th December 1939 to 23rd December 1939 when it was held by Mr. C. S. Devadhar, B.A.

Classification of Backward Classes.

3. The classification of certain communities was revised as follows during the year under report :—

Name	*Formerly classed as*	*Now classed as*
Agers (a caste of agricultural workers of the Kanara district).	Intermediate	.. Scheduled Class.
Devdigs (same as Suppaligs, a musician-caste of the Kanara district).	Not classified	.. Other Backward Classes.
Korchars (same as the Korvas of Karnatak).	Intermediate	.. Other Backward Classes.
Machigars (A Karnatak caste similar to the Mochis).	Intermediate	.. Scheduled Class.
Sanghars (A caste of wool-weavers of Maharashtra).	Intermediate	.. Other Backward Classes.

The list of the Backward Classes appended to Government Resolution, General Department, No. 9330, dated 3rd December 1934, remains in force except with the changes mentioned above. The Backward Class Board appointed a special sub-committee to consider various representations made by the different castes for their re-classification. This sub-committee submitted its report to Government with its recommendations which are under the consideration of Government.

Government has ordered that "Dheds", a caste among the Scheduled Classes, should be henceforth called "Mahyavanshis" as the term "Dhed" was considered to be degrading.

Primary Education of the Backward Classes.

4. Comparative figures regarding Backward Class pupils and teachers in the past two years are given in the following table :—

Pupils.

——	1938-39.	1939-40.
I. Scheduled Castes—		
(*a*) Attending common schools	73,150	89,945
(*b*) Attending special schools	13,021	13,187
Total ..	86,171	103,132
II. Aboriginal and Hill Tribes	49,763	60,500
III. Other Backward Classes	46,936	58,586
Grand Total ..	182,870	222,218

Teachers.

(In Government, District Local Board and Municipal Primary Schools) :—

——	1938-39.	1939-40.
Scheduled Castes—		
Men	1,098	1,274
Women	107	150
Total ..	1,205	1,424

	1938–39.	1939–40.
Aboriginal and Hill Tribes—		
Men	385	407
Women	21	28
Total ..	406	435
Other Backward Classes—		
Men	475	489
Women	66	51
Total ..	541	540
Grand Total—		
Men	1,958	2,170
Women	194	229
Total ..	2,152	2,399

(*i*) These figures show that there has been a substantial increase in the number of Backward Class pupils as well as teachers in Primary Schools. The total increase of 39,348 in the number of pupils is made up as follows :—

Scheduled castes	16,961
Other Backward classes	11,650
Aboriginal and Hill Tribes	10,737
Total ..	39,348

The increase is chiefly noticeable in the case of pupils and teachers belonging to the Scheduled Castes. The number of Scheduled Class children attending common schools during the year increased by as many as 16,795. There was an encouraging rise of 10,737 in the number of school children belonging to the Aboriginal and Hill Tribes but the increase in the number of teachers belonging to these tribes was only slight. It will be seen from these figures that the Aboriginal and Hill Tribes and the communities grouped as "Other Backward Classes" are still very backward in education as compared to the Scheduled Classes. It appears that the progress made in respect of primary education of the Backward Classes during the year was in a large measure due to the amendments made in the Primary Education Act by which the supervision of Primary Schools was taken over by Government and it is hoped this progress will be accelerated in the coming years.

(*ii*) The six night schools conducted by the District Backward Class Committee, Sholapur, were closed during the year on account of the discontinuance of the Municipal grants. The Sholapur Municipality is now conducting two night schools for adult members of the Scheduled Classes.

Differential treatment of Scheduled Class children in schools.

5. (1) Government has issued explicit orders that no discrimination should be observed with regard to admission and joint seating of Scheduled Class children in common schools. These orders are being observed in the majority of schools in the Province except in some parts of Gujarat where orthodox Hindus are still found opposed to treating Scheduled Class children on a footing of equality. A few typical cases which came to the knowledge of this Department regarding differential treatment given to Scheduled Class children in primary schools in Gujarat are given below :—

(*a*) At Por, Taluka North Dascroi of the Ahmedabad District, when Scheduled Class children were admitted into the Local Board School on the closure of the Harijan Sevak Sangh School they were not given equal treatment and the caste Hindus of the village threatened to harass the parents for sending their children to the common school. On this being brought to the notice of the Chairman, District School Board, Ahmedabad, he set matters right and no further trouble was reported from the village.

(*b*) It was represented to the Assistant Backward Class Officer, Northern Circle, Ahmedabad, that a Harijan girl was refused admission to the Vanita Vishram Girls' School, Surat. This incident was given publicity in a local newspaper also. After a protracted correspondence however the management of the school agreed to admit Harijan girls, and one such girl has actually been taken into the school since then.

(*c*) At Ogan, Taluka Viramgaon (Ahmedabad District), Scheduled Class children of school going age were receiving no education as they were not admitted in the Local Board School on account of opposition from the local caste Hindus. This opposition was however subsequently withdrawn as a result of persuasion by officers of this Department and the local school teacher now reports that Scheduled Class children are attending the school.

(*d*) At Davda, Taluka Nadiad, District Kaira, Scheduled Class children stopped attending the Local Board School on account of the caste Hindus' threats to their parents. The Backward Class Organiser working in the Northern Circle visited the village and on his advice the villagers at first agreed to allow the Scheduled Class children to attend the school, but they subsequently broke their promise. The Administrative Officer of the District School Board thereupon visited the village with the Mamlatdar of the Taluka and warned the caste Hindus that the school would be closed if they continued to flout the Government orders in this respect. Since this warning also had no effect the school had finally to be closed by the School Board. It is hoped this action will soon make the caste Hindus of the village realise their mistaken attitude and lead them in the interests of their own children to apply to the School Board for re-starting the school on condition that Scheduled Class children are freely admitted.

All cases of differential treatment in schools in Gujarat which were reported to this Department were properly inquired into and the officers concerned were moved to do the needful in the matter. It is hoped that the provision in the Government orders for the withdrawal of grants from schools refusing admission to Scheduled Class children will soon lead to increased admissions of Scheduled Class children in primary schools in Gujarat.

Secondary, Higher and Technical Education.

6. Several facilities are given to Backward Class students particularly girls receiving secondary, higher and technical education :—

(*a*) Students who are certified to be poor by the Head Masters of the schools are exempted from the payment of room rent in the hostels attached to Government Secondary Schools.

(*b*) Backward Class girls who are unable to pay fees are awarded free-studentships in Government Secondary schools. Twenty per cent. of the Middle School Scholarships allotted to each district for Backward Classes are reserved for girls belonging to these classes. The Educational Inspectors have been directed to give preference to Backward Class girls over boys in respect of vacant scholarships in Standards V to VII. Preference is also given to girls over boys in awarding scholarships to Backward Classes in Government Arts and Professional Colleges.

(*c*) The Backward Class students (including the Scheduled Class students) in Government and non-Government Arts and Professional Colleges were awarded the special scholarships provided for in the rules. In addition to this, the special free-studentships and additional scholarships granted last year were continued this year. Besides, Scheduled Class students who were newly admitted to these institutions were granted both scholarships and free-studentships. Similarly, students belonging to the Backward Classes other than the Scheduled Classes, newly admitted to these institutions were also given the concession of free-studentships.

(*d*) In addition to scholarships awarded by the Educational Department, this Department gives monetary help to poor and deserving students from the Backward Classes studying in Secondary Schools and Colleges by way of lump grants for the purchase of books, tools, etc., and for the payment of examination fees. Backward Class students in technical institutions are also given scholarships by this Department. The total amount spent on this account during the year under report was Rs. 6,971-12-0 as against Rs. 5,617 in the last year. A monthly scholarship of Rs. 15 was paid to a Backward Class student reading for the M.B.B.S. in the Grant Medical College, Bombay.

(*e*) Government in their Memo., Educational Department, No. 6374-K, dated 24th May 1939, sanctioned for Scheduled Class students two scholarships of Rs. 15 per month tenable for 4 years in the Diploma Classes of the College of Engineering, Poona, and two scholarships of Rs. 15 per month tenable for one year in the Training Classes for the S.T.C. examination.

Government (R. D. No. 7893/33 dated 28th November 1939) also sanctioned two additional scholarships for students belonging to the Scheduled Classes in the Veterinary College, Bombay, commencing from the 2nd term of the College year 1939-40.

Grants to Harijan Sevak Sanghs, Institutions working for the amelioration of Aboriginal and Hill Tribes, etc.

7. A sum of Rs. 6,500 *in all* was sanctioned during the year under report to the four Provincial Harijan Sevak Sanghs for carrying on their educational activities among the Scheduled Classes. These grants are sanctioned especially for the spread of literacy among the Scheduled Classes, but the Harijan Sevak Sanghs are also allowed to spend one-third of these grants for doing educative propaganda for the eradication of untouchability.

The following three institutions working for the benefit of the Aboriginal and Hill Tribes in the Partially Excluded Areas, *viz.* (1) The Bhil Seva Mandal, Dohad, Broach and Panch Mahals District, (2) The Dang Seva Mandal, Baglan, District Nasik, and (3) The Bhil Sudhar Samiti, Dhulia, District West Khandesh, also received a grant of Rs. 3,000 *in all* from this Department for their activities for the amelioration of these tribes.

Non-recurring grants amounting to Rs. 1,988 were paid to the following hostels during the year in order to enable them to provide the requisite equipment of furniture, utensils, etc., for the inmates :—

	Rs.
1. Shree Shahu Chhatrapati Boarding, Satara	400
2. Hostel for Lamani boys, Bijapur ..	500
3. Karnatak Harijan Balikashram, Hubli	288
4. Gidwani Harijan Ashram, Kaira ..	500
5. Asprushyodharak Boarding, Chalisgaon.	300
Total ..	1,988

Admission of Backward Class Teachers to Training Colleges.

8. According to Government orders the percentage prescribed for admission of Backward Class teachers in the Training Institutions in

this Province is 15 in all the Divisions. Information in this respect for the year 1939-40 is tabulated below :—

Serial No.	Division.	Number of teachers admitted in Training Colleges.	Number of Backward Class teachers admitted and their percentage.	Number of Scheduled Class teachers admitted (included in column 4).
1	2	3	4	5
			Per cent.	
1	Northern Division	470	43—9·16	18
2	Bombay Division	218	32—14·6	15
3	Central Division	832	90—10·8	68
4	Southern Division	280	22—7·8	8

It will be seen from these figures that it was only in the Bombay Division that the nearest approach was made to the prescribed percentage, viz. 15. In other Divisions the number of admissions of Backward Class teachers was far below the prescribed percentage, the reason given by the Educational Inspectors being the new scheme of training teachers, according to which senior teachers are given preference in selection for the training. Instructions have since been issued to the Educational Inspectors of the Divisions to pay special attention to the selection of Backward Class teachers for training and it is hoped that a substantial increase in admissions will be achieved in the near future in the Northern, Central and Southern Divisions.

Backward Class Hostels.

9. (*a*) The Government Backward Class Hostel, Poona, continued to work satisfactorily during the year. This hostel is meant for all Backward Class students including the Scheduled Classes. During the year under report 64 boys were admitted to the hostel, 2 of whom later on left the hostel. The total number on the roll at the end of the year was 62. It is gratifying to note that out of nine students from this hostel who appeared for the matriculation examination seven were successful.

(*b*) The number of privately managed Backward Class hostels that received Government grants-in-aid increased from 42 to 55 during the year under report as shown in the subjoined statement :—

Serial No.	Name of the hostel.	Grant paid during 1939-40.
		Rs.
1	Asprushyodharak Boarding House, Chalisgaon	891
2	Shri Chokhamela Boarding House, Jalgaon	350
3	Hostel for Tadvi Bhils, Yaval	489
4	Harijan Hostel, Amalner	509
5	Harijan Hostel, Jamner	397
6	Harijan Boarding House, Bhusaval	439
7	Ramapati Boarding House, Parola, East Khandesh	172
8	Rajendra Harijan Hostel, Dhulia	1,013
9	Hostel for Bhil Boys, Shahada	132
10	Hostel for Bhil Girls, Pimpalner	150
11	Harijan Kanya Chhatralaya, Dhulia	446
12	Gandhi Ashram, Godhra	172
13	Rashtriya Bhil Ashram, Mirakhadi	1,127
14	Yeshawatika Bhil Ashram, Jesawada	1,500
15	Titodi Bhil Ashram, Jhalod	1,120
16	Bhil Kanya Ashram, Dohad	160
17	Gidwani Harijan Ashram, Kaira	772
18	Rani Paraj Hostel, Mandvi	440
19	Harijan Ashram, Viramgaon	535
20	Backward Class Hostel, Ahmedabad	6,421
21	Vikasgriha, Ahmedabad	176
22	Jamnadas Bhagwandas Majur Kanya Griha, Ahmedabad ..	719
23	Bahishkrit Anath Vidyarthi Ashram for Boys, Sholapur ..	2,908
24	Bahishkrit Anath Vidyarthi Ashram for Girls, Sholapur ..	864
25	Vidyarthi Vasati Griha, Barsi	732
26	Somawanshiya Harijan Hostel, Ahmednagar	444

Serial No.	Name of the hostel.	Grant paid during 1939–40.
		Rs.
27	Harijan Seva Ashram, Ahmednagar	1,212
28	Harijan Kanya Mandir, Bijapur	336
29	Lamani Boys Hostel, Bijapur	486
30	Harijan Students Hostel, Bijapur	2,424
31	Backward Class Hostel, Bagalkot	240
32	Karnatak Education Society's Hostel, Belgaum	866
33	Backward Class Hostel, Sardar's High School, Belgaum ..	295
34	Harijan Ashram, Nipani	376
35	Kakkaya Samaj Boarding House, Nipani	510
36	Depressed Class Education Society's Hostel, Dharwar	978
37	Lamani Boys Hostel, Dharwar	880
38	Harijan Anath Ashram, Gadag	330
39	Harijan Vidyarthi Nilaya, Byadgi	798
40	Karnatak Harijan Balikashram, Hubli	1,324
41	Devi Ramabai Ambedkar Ashram, Dapoli	271
42	Union Boarding House, Poona	186
43	Seva Sadan Backward Class Hostel for girls, Poona	813
44	Hindu Widow's Home Association, Hingne Budruk, Poona ..	603
45	Boarding House for Parwari Boys, Mahad	222
46	Shri Shahu Chhatrapati Boarding House, Satara	1,748
47	Asprushya Vidyarthi Vasatigriha, Satara	404
48	Vidyarthi Boarding, Khanapur, District Satara	392
49	Depressed Class Mission Society's Hostel, Parel, Bombay ..	492
50	Shri Chhatrapati Shahu Boarding House, Nasik	750
51	Dongre Vanjari Boarding, Nasik	100
52	Ambedkar Anath Vidyarthi Ashram, Manmad	725
53	Harijan Hostel, Malegaon, District Nasik	170
54	Depressed Class Education Society's Hostel, Thana	1,380

Serial No.	Name of the hostel.	Grant paid during 1939–40.
		Rs.
55	Katkari Hostel, Wada, District Thana	450
56	Vanita Seva Samaj, Dharwar	..
57	Shikshan Prasarak Asprushya Vidyarthi Boarding, Nandurbar ..	..
58	Depressed Class Mission Society's Hostel for girls, Poona ..	..
59	Naik Ashram, Rayankhad, District Panch Mahals	..
	Total ..	42,776

(*Note.*—The last four hostels have been recognised for the purposes of grant-in-aid but no grants were given to them during the year under report.)

The total amount sanctioned as grants-in-aid to the different hostels in the year under report was Rs. 42,776 as against Rs. 27,849 during the previous year.

The orders contained in Government Resolution, General Department, No. 467/33, dated 18th October 1938, in respect of grants to the hostels on a per capita basis at increased rates as summarized in the last year's report, remained in force during the year under report. According to Government orders these hostels are open to students belonging to all the Backward Classes.

Government continued to pay a special additional grant of Rs. 1,200 to the Shree Shahu Chhatrapati Boarding House, Satara, during the year on account of the efficient work of the hostel. This institution is run on non-sectarian lines, where caste-Hindu and Scheduled Class students mix freely without any distinction, cook their food by turns, and dine together. The hostel continued to be well managed under the able guidance of Mr. Bhaurao P. Patil. The majority of the hostels mentioned in the statement actually cater mainly for the needs of students belonging to the Scheduled Classes though in theory they are open to students of *all* Backward Classes. An urgent need of the future appears to be the opening of more hostels in the areas inhabited by the Aboriginal and Hill Tribes especially in the Thana and Kolaba Districts as the educational needs of the rising generation among these Tribes, particularly the down-trodden Katkaris, are far more pressing than similar needs of the Scheduled Classes. It is hoped that private Associations like the newly started Adivasi Seva Mandal of Thana will start such hostels and take advantage of the increased per capita grants sanctioned by Government.

Recruitment to Public Services.

10. The following are the standing orders of Government as regards the recruitment of Backward Classes to Public Services :—

(*a*) Ten per cent. of all clerical vacancies under each appointing authority are to be filled by persons from the Backward Classes (including the Scheduled Classes) until members of the Backward Classes occupy 5 per cent. of the total clerical establishment of such authority.

(*b*) Twenty per cent. of talatis' vacancies are to be filled by Backward Class candidates (including Scheduled Classes) till a minimum of 10 per cent. of the total strength of the talatis' establishment in a District is reached.

(*c*) All vacancies of inferior servants are to be filled in by members of the Scheduled Classes till they occupy 10 per cent. of the inferior servants' establishment.

Steady progress is being maintained in carrying out these Government orders. The percentage of inferior servants belonging to the Scheduled Classes who were entertained in the whole of the Province has already exceeded the limit fixed and worked out at 13·4 per cent. on the 31st March 1939, as against 11·7 per cent. at the end of the previous year. Annual reports are submitted to Government by all departments through the Backward Class Officer on the recruitment of Backward Classes to the public services. These reports are scrutinized in order to ascertain whether the orders issued by Government on the subject are being properly carried out. It is gratifying to note that most of the Government Departments have faithfully carried out these orders inasmuch as the percentages prescribed by Government have been reached. This Department renders effective aid to Backward Class candidates in securing employment in various Government offices. Registers of such candidates continued to be maintained in the Head Office as well as in the offices of the Assistant Backward Class Officers and lists of the required candidates were supplied to recruiting officers whenever called for. This does not, however, absolve the appointing officers from the responsibility of finding for themselves suitable Backward Class candidates either by enquiry or by an advertisement in the local newspapers.

In order to avoid errors it is desirable that all officers when making appointments should strictly adhere to the schedules of Backward Classes printed as an accompaniment to Government Resolution, General Department, No. 9330, dated 3rd December 1934, as amended from time to time. In all disputed cases, it is open to the Officer concerned to refer the matter regarding classification to the Backward Class Officer for opinion.

Information regarding the number of Backward Class candidates for whom positions were secured through the agency of this Department

in various Government offices during the year under report is given in the sub-joined table :—

Serial No.	Qualifications.	Backward Classes other than Scheduled Classes.	Scheduled Classes.	Total.
1	Graduates	2	1	3
2	Matriculates	18	16	34
3	Primary School Leaving Examination ..	15	20	35
4	Non-qualified	12	33	45
	Total ..	47	70	117

The total number of persons from the Backward Classes for whom this Department secured employment during the year is eighteen more than the number of the previous year. In addition to this number, many Backward Class candidates secured employment independent of this Department.

Training of Backward Class candidates in office work.

11. Eight Backward Class candidates were entertained by this Department during the year on monthly stipends of Rs. 12 each for training in office work. Of these, seven candidates found employment in various Government Departments. This kind of training is found to be very useful in preparing Backward Class candidates for entry into Government service, because appointing officers usually prefer to engage candidates who have had some experience of office work rather than raw hands.

Housing Sites.

12. (*a*) It was mentioned in the last year's report, that it was proposed to acquire housing sites for the Backward Classes at Ainapur, District Bijapur, and Kudupali, Taluka Hirekerur, District Dharwar.

The acquisition proceedings regarding 12 acres of land in Ainapur for a site for the Lamanis are not yet complete.

The proceedings for the acquisition of land at Kudupali were dropped under Government instructions as the site proposed for the housing site for the Harijans was required for providing a much needed open space in the village.

(*b*) *Dharwar C.T.S. No. 69, Military ground.*

130 plots have been laid out in an area of 5 acres and 32 gunthas and have been assigned to different Backward Class communities as follows :—

Waddars	24
Mahars	2
Shikligars	12
Gollas	21
Madars	7
Chalwadis	4
Hulsavars	3
Total ..	73

Houses have been built on 23 plots, 8 by Waddars, 2 by Mahars, 11 by Shikligars and 2 by Gollas.

(*c*) *Dharwar City Survey No. 35, Hosayellapur.*—The area of this site, 2 acres and 32 gunthas, is divided into 60 plots, out of which 7 are reserved for public purposes. Of the remaining, 25 plots have been sold to Chhapparbands, 10 to Chalwadis, 10 to Chambars, 2 to Berads, 2 to Hulsavars and 2 to Mahars. Houses have been built on 24 plots. Most of the houses are well built with roofs of "Mangalore" tiles. The whole area presents a pleasing appearance. It was noticed that some of the plot-holders on these sites rented their buildings to outsiders for dwelling purposes and for running tea shops. As this involved a breach of the agreement form, the matter has been referred to the Revenue authorities for enquiry and necessary action.

(*d*) *Hubli* (*Bommapur*) *Survey No. 5.*—An area comprising 1 acre and 17 gunthas on this site is divided into 27 plots of 40′ × 40′ each. Many members of the Backward Classes including those from Criminal Tribes have applied for these plots but as the occupancy price appears to be high, the Collector of Dharwar has been requested to reduce the same in order to bring it within the reach of Backward Class occupants.

(*e*) *Hubli.*—The acquisition proceedings regarding a site for the Shikligars of old Hubli, as mentioned in the last report, have not yet been completed.

(*f*) *Belgaum District.*—As mentioned in the last year's report, a site measuring 5 acres in Survey No. 190 of Nipani was selected for the extension of the Dhor locality. The Municipality was requested to take steps for the acquisition of the site and to recover the cost by the sale of plots. As the Dhors have expressed their unwillingness to bear the heavy cost of acquisition, which is estimated at Rs. 11,320, the Nipani Municipality has been requested to state if it would bear part of the cost.

Bijapur District.

(*g*) *Bijapur.*—Survey No. 976 of Bijapur town has been reserved for providing housing sites for the Scheduled Classes. The area has been laid out into 70 plots. Roads have been marked and boundaries fixed. 11 plots have so far been disposed of.

(*h*) *Indi.*—A piece of land in Survey No. 179 of the Indi Free Colony, belonging to the Criminal Tribes Settlement Department, has been reserved for the Scheduled Classes. This has been divided into 40 plots, 40′ × 40′ each, with roads and boundaries fixed. Thirteen plots have been sold so far.

Sholapur District.

(*i*) *Hotgi.*—A piece of land consisting of 45 plots, each measuring 40′ × 40′, out of Survey No. 342 of Hotgi has been specially reserved for the Scheduled Classes.

(*j*) A site in Survey No. 345 of Akluj has been laid out into plots of 33′ × 33′ each, with roads marked and boundaries fixed. Two-thirds of the site has been reserved for the Scheduled Classes and one-third for Criminal Tribes licensees. Till now, 6 plots have been sold to the Scheduled Classes and 10 plots to Criminal Tribes licensees.

(*k*) *Sholapur.*—The Municipality has proposed to vary the town planning scheme Sholapur No. II into one of smaller plots, so as to bring them within easy reach of poor Harijans. The Municipality intends to dispose of the plots near the Panjrapole to Harijan tenants on an easy instalment system. 225 plots, each measuring 300 square feet, out of F. P. No. 41 in Town Planning Scheme, Sholapur No. II were given out on permit fees to Harijans and necessary amenities like roads, water supply, stand posts, latrines, and lights were provided for the occupants. Lay-outs for housing the Backward Classes have been proposed in F. P. No. 7-A and 13 of Draft Town Planning Scheme, Sholapur No. III and sent to Government for sanction by the Municipality.

(*l*) *Pandharpur.*—The Municipality has rented out open plots to members of the Backward Classes on a small monthly rental of 4 annas per plot to erect huts. The Municipality has also built 29 permanent rooms for the occupation of its sweepers on nominal rent.

Dharwar District.

(*m*) *Alagwadi, Taluka Navalgund.*—As the Scheduled Classes of Alagwadi are found to have no direct approach to the stream for fetching water, it is proposed to acquire 3 gunthas of land out of Survey No. 503 at a cost of Rs. 12 for this purpose. The acquisition proceedings are already in progress.

(*n*) *Dundur, Taluka Gadag.*—It was noticed that the Scheduled Classes of this village needed some land outside the gaothan for building houses. It is proposed to acquire 2 gunthas of land for the purpose. As the persons concerned were reported to be too poor to meet the cost of acquisition, an amount of Rs. 25 was provided by this Department to acquire this piece of land. The acquisition proceedings are in progress.

(*o*) *Chikkawadatti, Petha Mundargi.*—A site is proposed to be acquired from Survey No. 5 of this village for building purposes for the Mahars.

NASIK DISTRICT.

(*p*) *Sangavi, Taluka Sinnar.*—The Harijans of Sangavi applied for a gaothan plot in Survey No. 5/1 for shifting their houses which are at present situated on the bank of the river Godavari, and are in danger on account of floods. It is proposed to acquire 1 acre and 20 gunthas out of this Survey number at a cost of Rs. 120 to be incurred by this Department. The acquisition proceedings are in progress.

(*q*) *Jakhori, Taluka Nasik.*—The present locality of the Mahars at Jakhori being situated on the bank of a nala is in constant danger on account of floods. It is proposed to acquire a piece of land measuring 2 acres out of Survey No. 137 for housing the Mahars.

(*r*) *Malegaon, Taluka Shevgaon, District Ahmednagar.*—It is proposed to acquire a piece of land at Malegaon at a cost of Rs. 57-8-0 for housing the Mahars.

Land for cultivation.

13. Applications from members of the Backward Classes for grant of lands for cultivation were forwarded to the Collectors of the districts concerned for necessary action.

The Lamanis of Malapur, Taluka Hangal, District Dharwar, applied for the grant of Government waste lands measuring about 145 acres at Kare-Kyatnalli in Hangal Taluka for cultivation. The Revenue authorities were ready to consider this application favourably provided the Lamanis formed a Co-operative Farming Society. Efforts are being made to form such a Society.

Water facilities.

14. The scheme outlined by Government in Government Resolution, General Department, No. S. 92, dated the 14th September 1937, sanctioning a sum of Rs. 10,00,000 for adopting measures to improve the village water supply was completed during the year under report. It is hoped that the expenditure incurred on this scheme will go a long way in meeting the longstanding needs of the villagers, particularly the Scheduled Castes, whose interests have been especially safeguarded by Government in the orders issued from time to time. These orders have now been further strengthened by executive instructions whereby

touring officers are enjoined (*a*) to make specific inquiries in villages whether the Scheduled Classes are allowed to enjoy the unrestricted right of using the public wells, tanks, etc., and (*b*) to set the matters right if there are any reports to the contrary.

Government has also directed that no money from public revenue should be spent in repairing wells which are not thrown open to all castes. Mamlatdars, Prant Officers and Collectors have been asked to indicate in their diaries the conditions obtaining in the villages visited by them with regard to the use of public wells by members of all castes and creeds and the steps taken by them to enforce Government orders in this respect. Government has also issued orders that buckets and ropes should be provided at Government cost in the case of all wells situated in the compounds of Government offices where they do not at present exist. It is hoped that these orders will soon have the desired effect and that the Scheduled Classes will have free and unhampered use of all sources of public water supply all over the Province.

All complaints brought to the notice of this Department as regards inconveniences in respect of water facilities experienced by Scheduled Classes were attended to and the authorities concerned were moved to do the needful in the matter.

Miscellaneous grievances.

15. The following are instances of some miscellaneous grievances and complaints dealt with by this Department :—

(1) A dispute regarding the payment of " Aya " (remuneration for services rendered) between the villagers and Scheduled Classes of the village Byahatti, Taluka Hubli, District Dharwar, was reported last year. This dispute was amicably settled by the Assistant Collector, and resulted in the dropping of the social boycott against Mahars and the withdrawal of the suit filed by the villagers against the Mahars. To end the trouble once for all Government offered to assign some waste lands to the Mahars in lieu of " Baluta " but it is reported that the Mahars are not willing to accept this offer.

(2) As the Hubli Municipality tried to recover arrears of assessment amounting to Rs. 3,000 from the Bhangis for the past four years, the Administrator was approached and he has agreed to recover the arrears of only one year and to remit the balance with the sanction of the Commissioner.

(3) The sweepers of Mandvi, District Surat, represented to the Assistant Backward Class Officer, Northern Circle, Ahmedabad, that they had to use their own brooms and baskets and as their pay was small they found it difficult to do so. The Chairman, Sanitary Committee, Mandvi, was thereupon moved in the matter through the Collector of Surat and it is learnt that the sweepers are now supplied brooms and baskets by the Sanitary Committee.

(4) It was represented by a member of the Scheduled Class that as he was drinking water on the Sanand Station a railway porter inquired about his caste and when told who he was, insulted and abused him. As the Station Master did not pay heed to this complaint, the District Traffic Superintendent, B. B. & C. I. Railway, Ahmedabad, was requested by the Assistant Backward Class Officer, Northern Circle, Ahmedabad, to take necessary action in the matter. It is learnt that disciplinary action has since been taken against the porter.

(5) At Talod, Taluka Prantij (District Ahmedabad), a Scheduled Class person applied for compensation as his wife was drowned in a tank while working in the Laxmi Oil Mill. The Commissioner for Workmen's Compensation, Bombay, was moved in the matter, and an award of Rs. 500 was made as compensation in favour of the minor daughter of the deceased.

(6) The Scheduled Classes of Navagaum, Taluka Matar, District Kaira, complained that the road leading to their well was flooded causing inconvenience and hardship and requested that repairs to the slab drain and bank of the tank should be carried out. The Executive Engineer, Kaira, was moved in the matter and it is learnt that necessary repairs have now been made.

(7) It was represented by the sweepers working in the Chalisgaon Municipality that they were heavily indebted. The Assistant Backward Class Officer, Northern Circle, Ahmedabad, requested the President of the Municipality to start a Co-operative Credit Society for these sweepers. It is learnt that a Co-operative Credit Society has since been started for the benefit of the sweepers.

(8) It was noticed at Neri Budruk, Taluka Jamner, District East Khandesh, that wet bones of cattle emitting a foul smell were thrown by butchers in a big pit near the Scheduled Class quarters. The Collector, East Khandesh, who was addressed in the matter instructed the Sar Panch of the Village Panchayat to stop the nuisance. It is now reported that the pit near the houses of the Scheduled Classes has been removed.

(9) The Hubli Municipality levied a fee of Rs. 10 for each tanning pit used by the Dhors. As the fees charged were very high, nothing was paid by the Dhors for two years and they were then called upon to pay the arrears. As this would have caused a great hardship to the poor tanners, the matter was represented to the Administrator, Hubli Municipality, who ordered that a fee of Rs. 2 only per pit should be charged. The Commissioner, Southern Division, has also been moved to grant total exemption to the Dhors from such fees.

(10) The Backward Class Officer (Mr. Dhruva) made personal inquiries into certain allegations made by members of the Scheduled Classes in Khandesh, by visiting some of the villages concerned and submitted an exhaustive report to Government on the alleged grievances of the Scheduled Classes and their general condition in Khandesh.

Backward Class District Committees.

16. The non-official Backward Class District Committees of Sholapur, Dharwar and Belgaum are doing good work. Raosaheb Papanna of Belgaum and Mr. F. D. Ghodke of Hubli deserve special mention for the very useful work done by them for the respective district committees.

The Sholapur District Backward Class Committee suffered a great loss in the death of its Chairman, Rao Bahadur Mulay. The late Rao Bahadur was intimately connected with all measures for the amelioration of the Scheduled Classes in Sholapur District and was actively associated with the two prosperous hostels for Scheduled Class boys and girls at Sholapur. His place as Chairman of the District Committee has been taken by his brother Dr. Mulay, a well-known Surgeon of Sholapur who has been showing the same interest in the Backward Class work.

General.

17. (1) The practice of dedicating girls as "Devadasis" is particularly prevalent in the Belgaum, Dharwar and Bijapur Districts. Attempts were continued to stop this evil practice as shown in the following instances :—

(*a*) At Kalas, Taluka Hubli, the Secretary of the Backward Class District Committee, Dharwar, received information about the dedication of four girls and the Sub-Divisional Magistrate was requested to take necessary action in the matter. Enquiries in this respect are still in progress.

(*b*) It was complained by the Chairman, District Committee, Bijapur, that the Devadasi system was prevalent in Bagalkot, Bagewadi and Bilgi Talukas. He was thereupon requested by the Assistant Backward Class Officer, Central Circle, Sholapur, to report some specific cases to enable him to refer the matter to the Sub-Divisional Magistrate, Bijapur, for investigation and further action.

(*c*) On a complaint from the Scheduled Classes of Benkonkod, Taluka Ranebennur, District Dharwar, that a woman had dedicated her daughter to God (Mailarling), enquiries were made and papers forwarded to the Sub-Divisional Magistrate who took cognizance of the offence under Section 190 (*a*), Criminal Procedure Code, and directed the First Class Magistrate, Ranebennur, to try the case. The case ended in a conviction of the accused.

(2) Some changes in the jurisdiction of the Backward Class Officer and the Assistant Backward Class Officers were made during the year. The headquarters of the Assistant Backward Class Officer, Central Circle, were shifted from Bijapur to Sholapur, a more central place and a growing industrial city, where he can do more effective Backward Class work.

The Ahmednagar district was added to his jurisdiction, but Bombay City and the Bombay Suburban District were transferred to the Home Circle under the Backward Class Officer. The jurisdiction for Backward Class work is now as follows :—

Backward Class Officer—Home Circle.—Bombay City and the districts of Bombay Suburban, Poona, Satara, Kolaba, Thana and Nasik, with headquarters at Poona.

Assistant Backward Class Officer, Northern Circle.—The districts of Ahmedabad, Kaira, Broach and Panch Mahals, Surat and East and West Khandesh, with headquarters at Ahmedabad.

Assistant Backward Class Officer, Central Circle.—The districts of Sholapur, Bijapur and Ahmednagar, with Sholapur as the headquarters.

Assistant Backward Class Officer, Southern Circle.—The districts of Dharwar, Belgaum, Kanara and Ratnagiri, with headquarters at Dharwar.

(3) Government has passed orders permitting members of the Scheduled Classes to change their surnames at a concession fee of six annas only. This will enable the discarding of old surnames like Mahar, Mang, etc., which carry a sense of social inferiority.

(4) Government issued during the year a very instructive and informative pamphlet on Harijan Uplift. This pamphlet gives a clear idea of what Government has so far done for the Scheduled Classes.

Propaganda work for the amelioration of the condition of the Scheduled Classes is carried on as far as possible by officers of this Department when on tour by advising the Scheduled Classes to send their children to schools, to cultivate habits of cleanliness, to stop carrion-eating, to be temperate and to assert their civic rights in a constitutional manner. Many of their grievances are redressed on the spot by local enquiries and by bringing about a compromise between the disputing parties.

The Backward Class Board.

18. The life of the Backward Class Board which was to expire on 17th November 1939 was extended by a year. Government appointed J. A. Madan, Esquire, C.S.I., C.I.E., I.C.S., Adviser to H. E. the Governor of Bombay, as the President of the Backward Class Board vice the Honourable the Prime Minister who went out of office with the resignation of the Congress Ministry.

During the year under report the Backward Class Board held three meetings. The names of the members of the Board are given in Appendix I and some of the important subjects discussed by the Board are detailed in Appendix II.

Finance.

19. The expenditure incurred by the Backward Class Department during the year under report under the budget head "47-Miscellaneous Departments—Miscellaneous—Backward Class Officer" was as follows :—

	Rs.	a.	p.
1. Pay of establishment	1,523	0	0
2. Contingencies	8,416	0	0
3. Scholarships	6,971	12	0
4. Grant-in-aid	55,464	0	0
	72,374	12	0
Additional amount transferred from "28-Jails, etc." on account of the portion of the divisible expenditure of the Backward Class Officer and his establishment . . .	33,500	0	0
	1,05,874	12	0

The amount of Rs. 33,500 mentioned above includes expenditure on account of the travelling allowance of the members of the Backward Class Board while the expenditure on contingencies includes the amount spent for housing sites for Backward Classes and also expenditure on food charges, etc., in the Government Backward Class Hostel, Poona. The total expenditure increased from Rs. 89,092 in the previous year to Rs. 1,05,874 during the year under report.

Conclusion.

20. Mr. Symington's report on the Aboriginal and Hill Tribes in the Partially Excluded Areas was published during the year. This Report gives a vivid picture of the deplorable conditions under which the Aboriginal and Hill Tribes live and contains many valuable recommendations for the amelioration of these conditions. It is gratifying to note that Government lost no time in implementing some of the important recommendations made in the report but much still remains to be done. The problem of the Aboriginal Tribes in this Province bristles with difficulties mainly because the ordinary methods of rural reconstruction are not suited for the amelioration of these wild and simple children of nature. Government has so far done much for the betterment of one large section of the Backward Classes viz. the Scheduled Classes who have their spokesmen in the Provincial legislature and in the local bodies. The time has now come to rescue the other large section of the Backward Classes, which is voiceless and lives in remote hill tracts and forest areas, from the shameless exploitation to which it

has long been subjected on account of the childlike simplicity of the men and women belonging to it. Something has already been done by Government and non-official agencies to help the Bhils of the Panch Mahals and Khandesh, but so far nothing has been done for the oppressed hill tribes of the Konkan like the Katkaris, Varlis and Thakurs. An urgent need seems to be the appointment of a Special Officer under the control of this Department to look after the interests of these people in the Thana and Kolaba Districts on the analogy of the Special Officer for the Bhils in Khandesh.

I have the honour to be,

Sir,

Your most obedient servant,

P. J. GHANDY,

Backward Class Officer, Bombay Province, Poona.

APPENDIX I.

List of the Backward Class Board Members.

President.—Mr. J. A. Madan, C.S.I., C.I.E., I.C.S., Adviser to H. E. the Governor.

Vice-President and Secretary.—Backward Class Officer, Bombay Province, Poona.

Members—

1. Mr. Ismail Hassan Bapu Siddiqui, M.L.A.,
2. Mr. B. J. Shinde, M.L.A.,
3. Mr. P. L. Chowhan, M.L.A.,
4. Mr. K. R. Talkar, M.L.A.,
5. Mr. S. G. Songavkar, M.L.A.,
6. Mr. B. U. Vaghela, M.L.A.,
7. Mr. D. G. Jadhav, M.L.A.,
8. Dr. P. G. Solanki, M.L.C.,
9. Mr. M. G. Bhosale, M.L.C.,
10. Mr. L. M. Shrikant, M.L.A.,
11. Mr. N. S. Kajrolkar,
12. Mr. Muldas B. Vaishya,
13. Mr. M. B. Patel, M.L.A.,
14. Mr. B. K. Gaikwad, M.L.A.,
15. Mr. Bhaurao P. Patil,
16. Mr. R. R. Bakhale,
17. Mr. Gulzarilal Nanda, M.L.A.

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APPENDIX II.

IMPORTANT SUBJECTS DISCUSSED BY THE BACKWARD CLASS BOARD IN THE YEAR 1939-40.

20th Board Meeting held on 16th April 1939.

1. Government grant on a per capita basis should be allowed for the inmates of the Backward Class Hostels attending lower primary classes.

2. Awarding free studentships to the Scheduled Classes studying in aided secondary schools in the Province to the extent of at least 1/3rd of the total freeships awarded by the schools.

3. Appointment of qualified Scheduled Class candidates as teachers in such of the Municipal and Local Board Schools as are attended by Harijans.

4. Proposal to eliminate the word "Dhed" from the list of untouchables.

5. Enquiries in respect of harassment of the Scheduled Classes by Caste Hindus should be made by the Collector and the District Superintendent of Police, East Khandesh.

21st Board Meeting held on 30th September 1939.

1. Awarding examination fees in addition to scholarships and freeships to all Scheduled Class students.

2. Continuance of freeships to Backward Class students who are compelled to join other secondary aided schools on account of the closure of Government High Schools in the Province.

22nd Board Meeting held on 26th and 27th February 1940.

1. Regarding the commutation of the "Maharki Watan" in the Province of Bombay.

2. Audit of accounts of the Backward Class Hostels should be done by Government auditors free of cost instead of by registered auditors.

3. Enquiries regarding the condition of Katkari labourers should be made by the Collector of Thana.

4. New wells in Scheduled Class localities should be constructed.

5. Appointment of a special assistant under the Director of Public Instruction to look after the educational needs of the Scheduled Classes in the Province, more particularly in Gujarat.

6. To take measures to remove the huts and dwelling places of the Scheduled Classes from low-lying marshy and deserted places in the villages to better sites.

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